

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

In re:] Case No. 03-54906-ASW
]]
MARK JOSEPH BOSIO,] Chapter 7
]]
Debtor]
GOLDEN ROAD MOTOR INN, INC. dba] Adversary No. 03-5549
ATLANTIS CASINO RESORT,]
]]
Plaintiff,]
vs.]
]]
MARK JOSEPH BOSIO,]
]]
Defendant]

MEMORANDUM DECISION
DETERMINING DEBT TO BE DISCHARGEABLE

Before the Court is a complaint by Golden Road Motor Inn, Inc. dba Atlantis Casino Resort ("Creditor") against Mark Joseph Bosio, the Debtor in this Chapter 7 case ("Debtor"). The complaint alleges a debt of \$76,709.99 plus statutory damages for dishonored checks and negotiable instruments pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code §1719 and Nev. Rev. Stat. §41.620, attorney's fees, costs and interest and seeks a determination of nondischargeability based upon 11 U.S.C.¹ §523(a)(2).

The matter has been tried and submitted for decision. Creditor is represented by R. John Youngs, Esq. and Debtor is

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all statutory references are to Title 11, United States Code, as amended in 1994 ("Bankruptcy Code").

1 represented by Mark W. Hafen, Esq. At trial, Creditor called as
2 witnesses Debtor and Ronald Hunt. Debtor called himself as
3 witness.

4 This Memorandum Decision constitutes the Court's findings
5 of fact and conclusions of law, pursuant to Rule 7052 of the
6 Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure.

8 I.

9 FACTS

10 Debtor owned and operated a general engineering contracting
11 company, Mark Bosio Construction, Inc. dba B & B Construction
12 Co. ("Company") between 1997 and June 2003. The Company worked
13 on highways, bridges, subdivisions, parking lots, and shopping
14 centers and constructed everything but the buildings. The
15 Company had annual gross revenues of approximately \$4 million
16 between June 2000 and June 2003. The Company had annual net
17 income of \$20,000 between June 2001 and June 2003. The Company
18 paid Debtor an annual salary of \$70,000 in 2001 and \$100,000 in
19 2002.

20 Debtor testified that the Company started out as a sole
21 proprietorship and incorporated as an "S" corporation sometime
22 before 2003, but Debtor could not remember when. Because the
23 Company was an "S" corporation, Debtor testified that he
24 transferred dividends from the Company checking account to his
25 personal checking account from time to time. Debtor testified
26 that prior to his divorce, his ex-wife owned some percentage of
27 the Company stock, but Debtor could not recall the exact amount.
28 During the divorce, Debtor's ex-wife was given a 2003 Ford

1 Excursion valued at \$50,000 in exchange for her interest in the
2 Company. Debtor testified he could not recall when he acquired
3 sole ownership of the Company, but he did recall that by April
4 30, 2003, he was sole shareholder of the Company.

5 Debtor explained that to obtain projects for the Company,
6 he would make bids and, if he were the low bidder, the Company
7 would usually be awarded the contract. It took anywhere from 30
8 to 90 days after the bid was accepted for the contract to be
9 signed. Once the project was started, the Company would work
10 for 30 days fronting all of the costs, then bill the contractor.
11 The contractor then had 30 days to pay the bill, although it
12 could take longer on government projects. When paid during the
13 course of a project, the Company received 90% of the amount
14 billed. Meanwhile, the Company continued to work and front
15 additional expenses. To have sufficient operating funds, the
16 Company had a revolving credit line with the Bank of Walnut
17 Creek.

18 Creditor operates the Atlantis Casino Resort ("Casino"), a
19 gaming establishment, in Reno, Nevada. Debtor frequented the
20 Casino on several occasions between 1997 and 2003 for the
21 purpose of gambling. Debtor testified that he received several
22 perks from the Casino -- and that everything was complimentary
23 during his stays -- including free room. Debtor only frequented
24 that particular Casino and preferred keeping a good relationship
25 with the Casino so he could keep going there. Mr. Hunt, an
26 employee of Creditor, testified that Debtor was a well-
27 established customer and the Casino liked him.

1 Starting in 1997, Creditor extended check cashing
2 privileges to Debtor. Between 1997 and 2002, Creditor also
3 extended "markers" to Debtor. Mr. Hunt, the "cage manager" at
4 the Casino, who is also responsible for overseeing the
5 collection of Debtor's debt to Creditor, testified that markers
6 are a credit instrument under Nevada law that can be used for
7 the purpose of a customer gambling at a casino and no other
8 purpose. Markers can be used at the gaming tables such as
9 blackjack or 21, in the high limit slot area or at the cashier's
10 cage. A marker is a negotiable instrument whereby the customer
11 has 30 days to repay the instrument after issuance. If the
12 marker is not repaid, then the casino may forward the marker to
13 the customer's bank for payment, just like a check.

14 Debtor testified that at one point he owed Creditor \$80,000
15 that he repaid over time in monthly payments of \$5,000 with
16 funds from the Company. Creditor's records reflect that Debtor
17 incurred a \$75,000 debt on or about July 29, 2001, that a
18 \$25,000 payment was made toward the debt on or about October 5,
19 2001, and the remainder of the debt was repaid through ten
20 installments of \$5,000 between November 12, 2001 and September
21 12, 2002. Mr. Hunt testified that as of January 29, 2003,
22 Debtor had \$30,000 in markers outstanding from a trip Debtor
23 made in September 2002 and Debtor had reached the maximum of his
24 \$30,000 credit line with Creditor.

25 Debtor explained that, on or about January 29, 2003, prior
26 to heading to Reno, he arranged with Creditor to pay them
27 \$30,000 in personal checks so it would reopen his credit line so
28 he could come to the Casino and play. Debtor recalled telling

1 Mr. Hunt that Mr. Hunt could call the operations manager of the
2 Bank of America, the bank on which the personal checks would be
3 drawn, and confirm that there were sufficient funds in Debtor's
4 account to cover the checks. Debtor stated that he believed Mr.
5 Hunt did call Bank of America.

6 Mr. Hunt testified that on or about January 29, 2003,
7 Debtor contacted him and indicated that he was coming to the
8 Casino and wanted to play, that Debtor wanted to pay for some
9 outstanding markers and to reopen his \$30,000 credit line with
10 Creditor. Mr. Hunt testified that he asked Debtor how Debtor
11 intended to pay for the items and Debtor indicated that he would
12 like to pay by personal check. Mr. Hunt testified that he
13 requested Debtor pay the \$30,000 in outstanding markers by
14 cashier's check, but Debtor said he did not have enough time to
15 go to the bank to obtain a cashier's check and still wanted to
16 pay by personal check and have the credit line reopened.
17 (Debtor did not recall telling Mr. Hunt that he did not have
18 time to get a cashier's check so he would bring personal
19 checks.) Debtor gave Mr. Hunt the name of the bank operating
20 officer at Bank of America where his checking account was held.
21 Mr. Hunt testified that he contacted Jim Tressler,² Creditor's
22 executive credit host who was out on medical leave of absence at
23 the time, and asked Mr. Tressler how he felt about the
24 transaction. Mr. Tressler requested Mr. Hunt contact the bank,
25 which Mr. Hunt did, and Bank of America indicated that there
26 were sufficient funds in the checking account to cover \$30,000

28 ² Mr. Tressler was not called to testify. Creditor's counsel indicated that Mr. Tressler had
died the week before the trial was held.

1 in checks. Mr. Hunt called Mr. Tressler again, advised him of
2 what Bank of America had said, and Mr. Tressler advised Mr. Hunt
3 to proceed with the transaction because Debtor was a good
4 player.

5 Mr. Hunt testified that when Debtor showed up at the Casino
6 to play, he gave Creditor two personal checks drawn on the Bank
7 of America account in the aggregate amount of \$30,000
8 (collectively "the Checks"). The Checks cleared Debtor's
9 account of the balance owed for the markers given in September
10 2002 and Creditor reopened his \$30,000 credit line.

11 Between January 29 and January 30, 2003, Debtor gambled at
12 the Casino. During that time, Creditor asserts Debtor endorsed
13 over to Creditor a payroll check in the amount of \$1,709.99
14 drawn on the Company checking account at Community Bank
15 ("Payroll Check"). (Although Debtor did not recall doing so,
16 Debtor acknowledged that it was his signature on the back of the
17 Payroll Check.) Debtor also signed for a total of eleven
18 markers as follows: on January 29, 2003, ten markers drawn on
19 the Community Bank account in the aggregate amount of \$35,000³
20 (collectively, the "Community Bank Markers") and, on January 30,
21 2003, one marker drawn on the Bank of America account in the
22 amount of \$10,000 ("B of A Marker").

23 At some point during January 29-30, 2003, Creditor extended
24 Debtor's credit beyond his \$30,000 credit line. Debtor
25 testified that during his play at the Casino on January 29-30,

26 ³ Marker #45841 was in the amount of \$4,000; marker #45842 for \$2,000; marker #45844
27 for \$4,000; marker #45846 for \$3,000; marker #45847 for \$4,000; marker #45850 for \$2,000; marker
28 #45851 for \$4,000; marker #45852 for \$4,000; marker #45854 for \$3,000; and marker #45857 for
\$5,000.

1 2003, he had bad luck. He kept asking for markers to try to get
2 even. He eventually went to the casino cage to obtain
3 additional credit. Debtor testified that he met with Mr.
4 Tressler⁴ to see if he could secure more markers. Debtor knew
5 that he had 30 days to repay markers and at the time he spoke
6 with Mr. Tressler, Debtor knew that he had a \$120,000 check
7 coming to the Company and Debtor believed it would arrive in the
8 next week. Debtor testified that the Company had completed work
9 for a new school in Salinas more than 90 days before January 29,
10 2003, and was owed funds in the amount of \$120,000 from Thayer
11 Construction Company ("Thayer"), the general contractor for the
12 project. Debtor testified that he contacted the owner of Thayer
13 before going to Reno in January 2003 regarding the status of the
14 \$120,000 check and was told that the check would be coming and
15 should be in the mail to the Company anytime.

16 Debtor testified that he and Mr. Tressler went into a
17 private office behind the cashier's cage and that he saw Mr.
18 Tressler dial an 800 number for the Bank of America that Debtor
19 had given him. Debtor did not hear the conversation, but Debtor
20 invited Mr. Tressler to verify the funds in his checking account
21 and, based upon that conversation, Debtor received additional
22 markers.

23 Mr. Hunt testified that when Debtor was at the Casino, he
24 reached his credit limit and requested that Creditor increase
25 it. Mr. Hunt called the vice president of finance for Creditor
26

27 ⁴ Debtor testified that he met with Mr. Tressler at the Casino during January 29-30, 2003
28 while Mr. Hunt testified that Mr. Tressler was on a medical leave of absence during that time. Mr. Hunt
testified that he was the person that increased Debtor's credit limit at the Casino.

1 to get approval for the increase and it was approved.

2 Debtor testified that when he gave the Checks to Creditor he
3 knew there were funds in the Bank of America account to cover
4 the Checks. Debtor testified when he endorsed the Payroll Check
5 to Creditor he knew there were funds in the Company checking
6 account to cover the Payroll Check. Debtor testified that when
7 he signed for the Community Bank Markers and the B of A Markers
8 he intended to pay back the debt owed. Debtor explained that he
9 believed that he was to receive \$120,000 in funds from Thayer
10 during the next week and would be able to repay the markers. At
11 the time Debtor believed he had a flourishing business and, in
12 early 2003, the Company had several prospects for new projects.
13 Debtor testified that at all times he intended to repay all of
14 the gambling obligations he incurred at the Casino and never
15 intended to defraud Creditor.

16 Mr. Hunt testified that Creditor tracked only \$26,600 of the
17 markers provided to Debtor during that time and assumed that
18 Debtor had left the Casino with some unplayed funds. Mr. Hunt
19 stated that in his experience all gambling activity of Debtor at
20 the Casino would be tracked. Debtor testified that he used all
21 of the Community Bank Markers and the B of A Marker at the
22 Casino between January 29-30, 2003 and left broke. Debtor also
23 testified that he did not always have his play tracked while at
24 the Casino, especially when he placed bets at the dice tables.

25 When Debtor returned to Salinas from Reno, he learned to his
26 surprise that the payroll checks issued to his employees were
27 bouncing. Debtor had his secretary call Community Bank
28 immediately because Debtor believed there was \$50,000 in the

1 Company checking account. Community Bank told the secretary
2 that the Franchise Tax Board ("FTB") had frozen the account.
3 Debtor learned for the first time that both the Company checking
4 account and his personal checking account had just been frozen
5 by the FTB.

6 Debtor testified that he promptly contacted Julia Jackson⁵
7 at the Casino and told her that his accounts were frozen and he
8 could not make the checks good, and he would keep her abreast of
9 what was occurring. Debtor explained that he spoke with Ms.
10 Jackson between six and twelve times over the next three months
11 about repaying the markers and the checks and keeping her
12 apprised of his financial situation.

13 Mr. Hunt testified that Creditor promptly deposited the
14 Checks and the Payroll Check. Creditor's records indicate that
15 the Payroll Check was returned to Creditor on February 10, 2003
16 because the account was closed and that the Checks and the B of
17 A Marker were returned to Creditor between February 12 and 13,
18 2003 because there were insufficient funds in the account.

19 Mr. Hunt testified that Creditor held onto the Community
20 Bank Markers before submitting them to that bank as a normal
21 courtesy Creditor would extend to its customers. The Community
22 Bank Markers were eventually submitted to Community Bank and
23 were returned to Creditor on April 25, 2003 all marked "Account
24 Closed."

25 Debtor testified that if the Company bank account had not
26 been frozen and if the Company had received the \$120,000 owed to
27

28 ⁵ Ms. Jackson was not called to testify.

1 it by Thayer, he would have repaid the money owed to Creditor
2 like he said he would. Debtor explained that if he had received
3 the \$120,000 payment from Thayer, he would have deposited that
4 money into another account and paid Creditor.

5 Sometime in the Spring, the Bank of Walnut Creek ("Bank")
6 called the Company's revolving credit line. Debtor testified
7 that when he first started the Company, he had worked with a
8 gentleman named "Pete" at the San Benito Bank in Hollister and
9 obtained a \$50,000 line of credit. Pete left San Benito Bank
10 and moved to the Bank and, as the Company grew, the Company
11 continued to do business with the Bank. Debtor testified that
12 the Bank had fired Pete and now thought its loan with the
13 Company was a bad loan. The Company's revolving credit line
14 came up for renewal in the Spring of 2003 and the Bank declined
15 to renew it and instead called the loan. The Bank had a lien on
16 all of the Company's assets, including equipment worth
17 approximately \$1.5 million, as well as a lien on Debtor's house.

18 As a result of the frozen bank accounts and the problems
19 with the Bank, the Company filed a Chapter 11 bankruptcy
20 petition on April 30, 2003. In its original schedules, the
21 Company listed annual income of \$20,000; assets of \$323,750; and
22 liabilities of \$2,199,666. The Company subsequently amended its
23 schedules to add an additional \$421,688 in assets and \$174,500
24 in liabilities.

25 On June 17, 2003, the Company was granted the right to use
26 the Bank's cash collateral in the amount of \$30,000. Debtor
27 testified that those funds were used to pay the bills of the
28 Company and the payroll to stay in business. Debtor did not

1 receive any of the funds for his own personal use. Debtor also
2 testified that around that time Debtor was negotiating a plan of
3 reorganization with the Bank whereby Debtor would repay the
4 Bank's loan through a monthly payment of \$8,000. The Company
5 was the low bidder on three projects at the time of filing its
6 bankruptcy petition and Debtor believed that over time the
7 Company's income stream would repay all creditors in full. The
8 Bank, however, wanted a \$16,000 monthly payment and the Company
9 could not make a plan of reorganization work under those terms,
10 so the Company converted its bankruptcy case to a Chapter 7
11 liquidation on June 23, 2003.

12 Debtor stated that a number of the Company's creditors
13 pursued him for payment after the Company's bankruptcy case was
14 converted to Chapter 7 and he filed his personal bankruptcy case
15 on July 30, 2003. In his schedules, Debtor listed annual income
16 of \$35,000 for the year-to-date, assets of \$491,300 and
17 liabilities of \$1,468,522. Although Creditor had started
18 collection actions against Debtor in June 2003, Debtor testified
19 that the debt to Creditor had no bearing on his decision to file
20 bankruptcy.

21 On October 14, 2003, Creditor filed its complaint to
22 determine Debtor's debt nondischargeable.

23
24 II.

25 APPLICABLE LAW

26 A debt arising from actual fraud "other than a statement
27 respecting the debtor's or an insider's financial condition" is
28 excepted from a Chapter 7 discharge pursuant to §523(a)(2)(A).

1 The elements of a claim under this statute are:

- 2 (1) a representation made by the debtor;
3 (2) known by the debtor at the time made to be false;
4 (3) made with the intention and purpose of deceiving
5 the creditor;
6 (4) upon which the creditor justifiably relied;
7 (5) which proximately caused damage to the creditor.

8 In re Anastas, 94 F.3d 1280, 1284 (9th Cir. 1996) ("Anastas").

9 A representation can include a reckless disregard for the
10 truth of that representation, Anastas, at 1286.

11 The intent that must be shown for a determination of
12 nondischargeability under §523(a) is actual intent, not merely
13 intent implied in law, or constructive intent; such an intent
14 may, however, be inferred from the totality of the surrounding
15 circumstances, Anastas, at 1286.

16 The Bankruptcy Code is "designed to afford debtors a fresh
17 start, and we interpret liberally its provisions favoring
18 debtors." In re Bugna, 33 F.3d 1054, 1059 (9th Cir. 1994). The
19 Code's limited exceptions to the general policy of discharge are
20 to be construed narrowly, In re Riso, 978 F.2d 1151 (9th Cir.
21 1992).

22 The plaintiff in an action for determination of
23 dischargeability under §523(a) bears the burden of proving all
24 elements of the claim(s) for relief asserted by a preponderance
25 of the evidence, Grogan v. Garner, 498 U.S. 279 (1991).

26
27 III.

28 ANALYSIS

1 Creditor has not met its burden of proof that Debtor
2 knowingly made a misrepresentation with the intent to defraud
3 Creditor with respect to any of Debtor's debts to Creditor.

4 Specifically, Creditor failed to prove that Debtor
5 misrepresented the truth by giving Creditor the Checks and
6 endorsing the Payroll Check without intending to cover those
7 checks. Creditor claims that Debtor knew or should have known
8 that he did not have sufficient monies on deposit for the checks
9 to be paid according to their terms, and urges the Court to
10 infer therefrom that Debtor knowingly misrepresented an
11 intention to perform acts that Debtor knew were impossible.

12 However, the evidence does not support a finding that Debtor
13 knew or should have known that there were insufficient funds in
14 the accounts on which the Checks and the Payroll Check were
15 written. In fact, the evidence is clear that there were
16 sufficient funds in those accounts and both Debtor and Creditor
17 knew those funds were there. Debtor testified credibly that he
18 knew there were sufficient funds in the Bank of America account
19 to cover the Checks. Even Creditor's employee, Mr. Hunt,
20 testified that he called Bank of America and received
21 verification that there were sufficient funds in Debtor's
22 account on January 29, 2003 to cover the Checks. As for the
23 Payroll Check, Debtor stated that he knew there were sufficient
24 funds in the Company checking account when he gambled at the
25 Casino. He called Community Bank immediately upon learning
26 after he returned from Reno, that other payroll checks issued
27 had bounced. It was only after returning from Reno that Debtor
28 learned that the FTB had placed a lien on both his personal

1 checking account at Bank of America and the Company's checking
2 account. But for the freezing of the two checking accounts by
3 the FTB, there would have been sufficient funds to cover the
4 Checks and the Payroll Check. The Court finds that if the FTB
5 had not frozen the two checking accounts, the Checks and the
6 Payroll Check would have been good and would have been paid
7 promptly.

8 Creditor also has failed to prove that Debtor misrepresented
9 the truth by signing the Community Bank Markers and the B of A
10 Marker without intending to repay the markers under their terms.
11 Creditor claims Debtor knew or should have known that the
12 markers were written on a closed, or soon to be closed, account
13 and he knew or should have known that he and the Company were
14 insolvent when the markers were written. Creditor urges the
15 Court to infer therefrom that Debtor knowingly misrepresented an
16 intention to perform acts that Debtor knew were impossible.
17 There are two flaws in Creditor's arguments.

18
19 First, the evidence does not support a finding that Debtor
20 was unable to perform under the Community Bank Markers or the B
21 of A Marker when he signed them on January 29-30, 2003. Debtor
22 admitted that he did not have sufficient funds in his two
23 checking accounts to cover the markers on the date of signing,
24 but Debtor's uncontroverted testimony was that he did expect to
25 receive a \$120,000 check from Thayer in the next week; Debtor
26 clearly had the ability when he signed the Community Bank
27 Markers and the B of A Marker to repay those funds within the 30
28 days permitted for repayment. There was no proof that Debtor

1 could not have acquired the \$45,000 owed under the markers by
2 the February 26, 2003 due date for payment. Debtor reasonably
3 expected a \$120,000 payment to the Company during the first week
4 of February 2003, and Creditor did not establish that this
5 payment could not produce the necessary cash by the marker due
6 date (nor did Creditor prove that other possible sources of
7 funds did not exist, such as other amounts owed to the Company).
8 With respect to Debtor's knowledge of whether he could obtain
9 \$45,000 in 30 days after signing the Community Bank Markers and
10 the B of A Marker, his uncontroverted testimony was that he had
11 contacted Thayer before leaving for Reno and believed that the
12 \$120,000 owed the Company would be paid during the first week of
13 February 2003. Debtor's expectation may have had an element of
14 hope in it, but Creditor certainly took that risk because
15 Creditor knew that Debtor did not have the funds on hand.
16 Debtor had explained the facts as they were to Creditor.⁶ The
17 evidence does not establish that, on January 29-30, 2003, Debtor
18 had no means of raising \$45,000 by February 26, 2003. Debtor
19 would certainly have had the ability to pay \$45,000 if the check
20 from Thayer for \$120,000 had arrived when Thayer said it would.

21 Second, mere inability to perform does not constitute a
22 misrepresentation of intent to perform for purposes of
23 §523(a)(2)(A). The Ninth Circuit has held:

24 We emphasize that the representation made by
25 the card holder in a credit card transaction
26 is not that he has an ability to repay the
debt; it is that he has an intention to

27 ⁶ Creditor did not justifiably rely on Debtor being paid an additional \$120,000 by Thayer.
28 Debtor reasonably expected those funds, but Creditor had actual knowledge that Debtor did not have
them.

1 repay. [original emphasis] ... [¶] Thus,
2 the focus should not be on whether the debtor
3 was hopelessly insolvent at the time he made
4 the credit card charges. ... Rather, the
5 express focus must be solely on whether the
debtor maliciously and in bad faith incurred
credit card debt with the intention of
petitioning for bankruptcy and avoiding the
debt. ...

6 Anastas, at 1285. This rationale is not limited to debt
7 incurred by credit card use and is equally applicable to debt
8 incurred by markers. In re Miller, 310 B.R. 185, 197 (Bankr.
9 C.D. Cal. 2004) (applying Anastas to a nondischargeability
10 action involving the issuance of markers). Thus, even if it had
11 been proven that Debtor signed the markers unable to perform
12 immediately and knowing of that disability, such facts alone
13 could not, under Anastas, lead to the conclusion that Debtor
14 misrepresented his intention to perform.

15 The debtor in Anastas had no apparent ability to pay his
16 debt in full at the time it arose, but other facts belied the
17 creditor's contention that he incurred the debt with no
18 intention of repaying it: he made payments for six months,
19 attempted to work out an alternative repayment arrangement, and
20 testified that he wanted to repay but "had a gambling addiction
21 which led him into unexpected financial circumstances", Anastas,
22 at 1287. The Ninth Circuit concluded that:

23 Obviously, Anastas had a serious gambling
24 problem. Although it may have been unlikely
25 that he would win back the money to be able
26 to pay back the cash advances that financed
27 the gambling, the record fully supports
28 Anastas' good faith intention to do so.
There is no basis in the record for a finding
of the type of malicious and bad faith intent
not to repay that is necessary for a finding
of actual fraud under section 523(a)(2)(A).
Thus, we hold that the bankruptcy court was
clearly erroneous in finding an intent to

defraud.

Anastas, at 1287. Similarly, Debtor here made efforts to perform the cash payment requirement of the Community Bank Markers and the B of A Markers. Prior to going to the Casino on January 29, 2003, Debtor called Thayer and inquired as to when the Company could expect the \$120,000 payment that was overdue. Debtor was told that the payment should arrive during the first week of February 2003. When the \$120,000 payment did not arrive as expected, Debtor conscientiously called Creditor and kept it apprised of Debtor's efforts in securing funds to repay the markers. Debtor also owned the Company, but the frozen bank accounts and the calling of the revolving line of credit by the Bank hampered Debtor's efforts to continue operating his business. The record does not support a finding that, at the time Debtor signed the Community Bank Markers and the B of A Marker, he did not intend to repay them according to their terms.

Finally, Creditor asserts that Debtor acted with reckless disregard for the financial condition of the Company and himself when presenting the Checks and the Payroll Check and obtaining the Community Bank Markers and the B of A Marker. Creditor asserts that the fact the Company filed a bankruptcy petition three months after Creditor extended credit to Debtor and Debtor himself filed for bankruptcy six months after the extension indicate Debtor obtained the markers with reckless disregard for his and the Company's actual financial condition.

A representation under §523(a)(2)(A) can include a reckless disregard for the truth of that representation. In determining

1 what conduct could be considered to be reckless disregard, the
2 Bankruptcy Appellate Panel of the Ninth Circuit has held:

3 [R]eckless conduct must involve more than
4 simple, or even inexcusable negligence; it
5 requires such extreme departure from the
6 standards of ordinary care that it presents a
7 danger of misleading [those whom rely on the
8 truth of the representation]. (Citation
9 omitted). ... '[R]eckless indifference to the
actual facts, without examining the available
source of knowledge which lay at hand, and
with no reasonable ground to believe that it
was in fact correct' [is] sufficient to
establish the knowledge element. (Citation
omitted).

10 In re Kong, 239 B.R. 815, 826-27 (9th Cir. BAP 1999).

11 The evidence does not support a finding that Debtor knew or
12 believed that he would not be able to repay his debt to
13 Creditor. The Court finds that Debtor definitely believed he
14 would be able to repay his gambling debts to Creditor. In fact,
15 although the Company must have had a tax issue, the evidence
16 supports a finding that Debtor sincerely believed that the
17 Company was operating successfully in late January 2003 -- with
18 several new projects in the pipeline. Debtor credibly testified
19 that but for the FTB freezing the Company's bank accounts and
20 the Bank calling the revolving credit line, the Company would
21 have continued to operate and would not have had to file a
22 bankruptcy petition. Debtor also testified credibly that if the
23 Bank had accepted an \$8,000 monthly payment, that the Company
24 might well have been able to emerge successfully from
25 bankruptcy. Debtor explained credibly that even after the
26 Company filed its bankruptcy petition, he intended to reorganize
27 the Company and pay creditors in full over time and would have
28 but for the Bank refusing to agree to the plan of

1 reorganization. The Company apparently did have a tax problem,
2 but there is no evidence that Debtor knew or had reason to know
3 that his and the Company's checking accounts were going to be
4 frozen by the FTB. Debtor did not act recklessly towards
5 Creditor.

6 In sum, the Court finds that Debtor was honest and
7 forthright in his dealings with Creditor. Debtor fully intended
8 to repay Creditor for all of his gambling debts incurred at the
9 Casino and he reasonably believed the checks and markers he gave
10 the Casino on January 29 and 30, 2005 were backed by good funds
11 in the Company's and his personal bank accounts or soon would be
12 -- through the expected Thayer payment to the Company. Creditor
13 fully and knowingly assumed the risk that Thayer would not pay
14 Debtor in a timely fashion.

15
16 CONCLUSION

17 For the foregoing reasons, the claims asserted by Creditor
18 against Debtor are discharged under 11 U.S.C. §523(a). Counsel
19 for Debtor shall submit a form of judgment holding that Debtor's
20 debt to Creditor is not excepted from his bankruptcy discharge -
21 - after review by Creditor as to form.

22
23 Dated:

24
25
26
27 _____
ARTHUR S. WEISSBRODT
UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE
28